



MAY 21 2003

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Veterinary Services

National Center for
Import and Export

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Subject: Clarification of the Prohibition of the Importation of All Live Ruminants, Ruminant Meat, Ruminant Meat Products and Other Ruminant Protein Products from Canada due to Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)

To: U.S. Importers, Brokers, and Other Interested Parties

On May 20, 2003, Mr. Bobby R. Acord, Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), received information from Dr. Sarah Kahn, Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer and Director, Animal Health and Production Division, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, reporting a confirmed case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy. Due to this reporting, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), APHIS, Veterinary Services (VS) is placing a prohibition on the importation of all live ruminants (such as cattle, sheep, goats, cervids, camelids), ruminant meat, ruminant meat products and other ruminant products from Canada. This prohibition is effective as of 1:30 p.m. e.s.t., May 20, 2003. APHIS believes that emergency measures are necessary to minimize risk to livestock, livestock producers and other industries in the United States.

Effective immediately, we are suspending the importation of ruminants, edible and inedible ruminant meat, ruminant meat products, and other ruminant products that have been stored, processed, or otherwise associated with a facility located in Canada. Further, we are suspending the transit of ruminants from Canada across the U.S. for purposes of export.

The prohibited edible and inedible ruminant products may include but may not be limited to: meat, processed animal proteins, (such as meat and bone meal (MBM), meat meal, bone meal, blood meal, protein meal, etc.), offal, tankage, processed fats and oils, ruminant glands, unprocessed ruminant fat tissue and tallow (that could be incorporated into animal feed.) Derivatives of processed animal proteins, or any product containing such ruminant materials, including garbage for feeding, are also prohibited.

The following animal and animal products are still eligible for entry: milk, milk products, ruminant hides and ruminant hide derived products, ruminant semen and embryos, and garbage for landfill disposal. Semen and embryo import protocols that include the BSE certification statements will be completed shortly.



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As with restrictions placed on other BSE affected countries, importations from Canada of inedible, processed, non-ruminant material (e.g., feather meal) will not be eligible for entry until APHIS can verify that these products have not been commingled or cross-contaminated with ruminant products. In making this determination the following criteria will be considered and verified by APHIS:

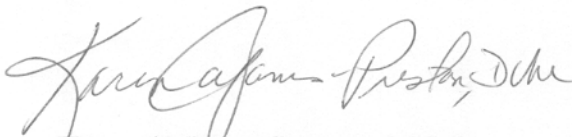
- All steps of processing and storage are carried out in a dedicated foreign facility,
- The foreign facility should have a cooperative service agreement with APHIS,
- The facility should demonstrate that the material intended for export to the United States was transported in a manner that would prevent cross-contamination with prohibited materials.
- The foreign facility should allow periodic APHIS inspection, and
- The facility should supply government certification regarding the dedicated processing facility.

An interim rule to include Canada on the list of countries that the USDA considers to be affected with BSE is being prepared and will be published in the Federal Register in the near future. Other BSE countries are listed in Title 9 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 94.18(a)(1) and (2), as well as on the APHIS home page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ncie/country.html>.

I ask for your immediate cooperation in discontinuing all shipments of ruminant meat, ruminant meat products, and other animal products that have been stored, processed, or associated in any way with ruminant products of Canadian origin (in addition to Israel, Japan, Europe or Oman).

I am aware that this prohibition places a burden upon you. However, APHIS' obligation to protect U.S. agriculture is paramount and the steps we are taking are absolutely necessary. As we learn more information about the case of BSE in Canada, the restrictions placed on Canadian imports will be re-evaluated.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.



Karen A. James-Preston, DVM
Director
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National Center for Import and Export